

The Hilltop Chimes

MAY 2025

First Congregational United Church of Christ
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From the Pastor's Desk



With Lent, Holy Week, and Easter Sunday behind us, sometimes we might wonder what we're supposed to be doing as the Church during the "50 great days of Eastertide." As the scripture stories from the lectionary suggest during this season, we

are called—like the early disciples—to serve as witnesses to the Resurrection.

That may sound intimidating. It doesn't necessarily mean that we have literally seen the Risen Jesus, but it does mean we witness to our *experience* of a Risen Christ.

Sometimes when we hear the word "witness" in a religious context, we might assume it means something along the lines of proselytism—of trying to convince others to believe similar things to what we believe.

Neither do I think that's what it means to serve as a witness to the Resurrection. Rather, I think the act of witnessing has to do with telling what we do know—that God is a God of goodness and love, that God seeks liberation of all, that God brings forth new life and hope, and that we find God especially present in community.

And here's one more thing about being a witness in this sense—telling what we experience doesn't have to be with our words, but involves our deeds, too. We serve as witnesses to the Resurrection when we show our values in our

real-world everyday life, values that stem from our trust in these truths about God.

So let us indeed continue to serve as witnesses to Christ's Resurrection and to the good news of what God does in the world—by showing the world what good God does through us. And let us offer this witness not just during Eastertide, but in every season.

-Chris

Rev. Dr. Chris Ross, Pastor

Cell: (920) 838-5630

Email: rev.fatmoses@gmail.com

Pastor's Continuing Education - April 22 through May 5th

During his absence, **The Rev. Katie Van Der Linden**, Pastor of Ebenezer Moravian Church, will be available for pastoral care emergencies.

She can be reached at (610) 442-3790.



Outdoor Worship on the Ruth Christensen Memorial Patio

On *Rural Life* Sunday May 25th, we will be holding worship outdoors on the church patio. You are invited to bring your non-human family members, as the service will include a Blessing of the Pets! Please see Chris if you have any questions.



Notes from the Music Director...

There are so many to thank for their musical contributions during the month of April! I must recognize Laura Yurs, who played flute on Tartan Sunday and on Easter Sunday, Saedra Fremont, who sang on Good Friday, Sue Weihert, who subbed for Tom as he begins his time away, the choir, and especially Tom, who had extra music to prepare for the entire Lenten season and Holy Week.

Senior Choir-continues to rehearse at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. We rehearse and sing in service almost weekly, but on May 11th we will not have a rehearsal or sing in service. Cooper Wood will rehearse and accompany us on May 4 & 18, as Tom continues his time away. We will continue our choir season through June 8th this year.

We can always use additional singers and you do not have to make a weekly commitment to be a part of the choir. High school age and above are welcome. Drop-ins are certainly welcome.

Juanita Edington
c.920-988-2416 (feel free to text)
jaemusiclover@gmail.com

Tartan Day Revisit Choir Anthem- Hymn of Unity

MacPherson's fiddle tune was written by infamous James MacPherson (1675-1700), a freebooter (pirate) and fiddle player in the hours before his death. Later, poet Robert Burns, among several others, set lyrics to the tune, as did John Haynes Holmes, the lyricist of the Hymn of Unity.

Holmes (1879-1964) was a Unitarian minister, a pacifist, co-founder of NAACP and the ACLU. He is noted for his anti-war activism. This choir anthem was arranged by Raymond H. Haan.

🌀 Hymn of Unity 🌀

*O God of all, whose spirit moves
From pole to silent pole
Whose purpose binds the starry spheres
In one stupendous whole,
Whose life, like light,
was freely poured
On all beneath the sun
To you we lift our hearts and pray
That you will make us one.*

*One in the patient company
Of those who heed Your will,
And steadfastly pursue the way
Of your commandments still:
One in the holy fellowship
Of those who challenge wrong,
And lift the Spirit's sword to shield
The weak against the strong.*

*One in the truth that makes us free,
And faith that makes us brave;
One in the love that suffers long
To seek, and serve, and save;
One in the kingdom of your peace,
When earthly kingdoms fall,
When we shall see you face to face
And own You God of all.*

Tech Opportunities

Thank you to Pamela Martin, Bill Edington & Dale Bakke who recorded during April.

We record each service and are looking to expand our recorders. The primary responsibilities are to run the camera focusing on the "action at the moment" (the liturgist, acolyte, minister, choir, or special musician/s) and make microphone adjustments as needed. I am currently taking care of the editing and production. Please contact me if you are interested and when you are available. Training is available. Thanks.

Juanita Edington
c.920-988-2416 (feel free to text)
jaemusiclover@gmail.com



You can Serve in Worship

Ushers: It's the hope that we will have a rotation of volunteers to usher and greet on Sunday mornings. Training is provided.

Ushers arrive at 9:30 to open the main entrance doors, turn the lights on and greet worshippers. In addition, you would assist the acolyte in lighting the taper of the candle lighter. Ushers help collect the offering. If you are interested, check in with Bill Edington on Sunday or contact Laurel in the church office (920) 261-6213 lbentz@firstcongwtn.org.

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Fellowship: Rotations of servers and Bakers are needed each Sunday of the month. Bakers provide the snacks. Prior to worship, "servers" get the

coffee started and place the snacks out in time to attend worship.

****SIGN UP to help** by contacting Jennifer Rhodes at myvibe04@yahoo.com or calling her at (920) 296-1378

****Schedules are on the narthex table, if you need to switch dates please contact one of the volunteers directly.**

May SCHEDULE:

May 4: Bake: John & Jovi Tomaneng, Joyce Uglow
Serve: _____

May 11: Bake: Jennifer and Brian
Serve: Jennifer and Brian

May 18: Bake: Juanita Edington, Lynda Eicher
Serve: Sue Harms

May 25: Bake: Lori Rhode, Jennifer Rhodes
Serve: Fran Milburn

Mission and Giving: An Opportunity to Help Your Community!!

THE BREAD BASKET PANTRY

Is newly located at 208 S. 3rd St., Watertown and is another amazing local resource for our community. In addition to food items, clothing are especially needed. Many individuals and families don't arrive prepared for our seasons



There is a shopping cart in the narthex. You are welcome to bring any food at any time. **There is always a need for** egg cartons

THE BREAD BASKET HOURS ARE:

- Mondays 12:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesdays 11 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Fridays 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Note: Bread Basket moved to 208 South 3rd Street and reopened Monday, April 7th.

Learn more at their website:

<https://www.breadbasketwisconsin.org/>

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THE WATERTOWN FOOD PANTRY



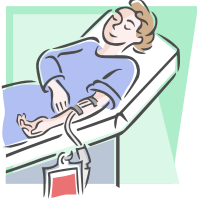
Located in Immanuel Lutheran Church serves the people of Watertown to provide fresh food for individuals and families.

FOOD PANTRY HOURS ARE:

- Mondays 10 a.m.- 12 p.m.,
- Tuesdays 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.,
- Wednesdays 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.,
- Thursdays 3 p.m.—5:30 p.m.
- Fridays 10 a.m. -12 p.m.

Learn more at their website:

<https://www.watertownfoodpantry.org/>



Blood Center of Wisconsin Versiti - **BLOOD DRIVE**

Thursday, May 22nd 1-6 p.m.
In Fellowship Hall

Blood Drive: our next blood drive will be on Thursday, May 22nd from 1pm-6pm. Please let Melissa Mattke know if you would like to register for a time to donate.

This time of year always brings a low number of donors. Let's do our part to help!

https://donate.wisconsin.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/262926

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH SPECIAL UCC OFFERING

During the month of May

Conferences in the UCC work to support leaders, connect congregations, engage youth and young adults, and to imagine together a just world for all.

And the **Strengthen the Church** offering makes this revitalizing work possible.



UCC Summer Camps Don't miss out!

The Larson Camp Fund provides scholarships of 50% to help cover the cost for children and youth attending any of the camp sessions offered so no one gets left out.

No one should miss out on camp for financial reasons so please contact the church office about additional scholarship support.

The camp schedules for 2025 at Daycholah and Moon Beach are set. Information can also be obtained on-line at

<https://ucc.org/calendar/>

you are invited to join us for a

Bystander Intervention De-escalation Training

Training will focus on ways to intervene in public instances of interpersonal violence and harassment while considering the safety of all parties. Workshop includes:

- Learning tips and strategies
- How to document
- Know your rights
- Practice scenarios on how to show up and support a range of targeted identities, both as the intervener and as the person experiencing harm



Sunday, May 18 from 11:30a-1:30p
First Congregational United Church of Christ
120 Kuckkan Ln, Watertown, WI

Hosted by ACTive Bystander WI & Social Justice Watertown

Sign up by May 11 at <https://rb.gy/b316c5> or scan

Email socialjusticewatertownwi@gmail.com with questions



SENIOR CARE FAIR

This year's Senior Care Fair has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 14th at the Senior and Community Center.
3:30-5:30 p.m.

STUDY/DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS:

1. Pastor Chris made available study/devotional material that he wrote. It covers Holy Week but also these days following (Eastertide). Copies are on the narthex table.
2. We have Upper Room & These Days devotional booklets on hand that you can pick the up at church.. They are in the Narthex.

If you questions please contact the church 920-261-6213 or email me at lbentz@firstcongwttn.org

Peace and grace, Laurel W Bentz

BOOK OF LIFE



James Ortega	05/05
David Maas	05/05
Lucas Blaszak	05/08
Jennifer Bakke	05/10
Helen Ulatowski	05/10
Vivian Howard	05/10
Jean Nicholas	05/11
Nicole Schumacher	05/12
Chuck Weiss	05/16
Jonathan Edington	05/17
Laurel W Bentz	05/19
Toni Farrell	05/21
Sandi Budewitz	05/21
Jill Kulick	05/25
Chara Asher	05/27
Maxwell Chowanec	05/28
Collin Kulick	05/28
Joe Ruddell	05/29

Words of thanks...

Thank you everyone who supported the Easter Breakfast by bringing items or monetary contributions. The breakfast went well and we had a nice turnout.

Please let the church office know if you would like to coordinate next year's breakfast. (Easter will be April 5th)

Thank you!

Jennifer Rhodes



Thank you to those who shared Easter Plants for Easter Sunday. Diane Koch, in memory of Dean Koch. Bill and Juanita Edington, Fran Milburn and Lee Buescher. A special thank you to Jennifer Rhodes who donated Easter Lilies and offered them to anyone who would like one.

How to Join Us for Worship

- 1) Through the email link sent out weekly "Welcome to Worship" from lbentz@firstcongwtnn.org. Join our mailing list.
- 2) Our church's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-United-Church-of-Christ-118640148151341/>
- 3) Watertown Cable channel 985 broadcasts the Sunday service on Thursdays at 10 am and 5 pm and then again on the following Sunday at 6 pm.
- 4) Our church website: <https://firstcongwtnn.org/> ('Media')
Service links are posted on Monday.

Financial Updates

GENERAL FUND As of March 31, 2025

2025	BUDGETED CONTRIBUTIONS	ACTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	BUDGETED TOTAL INCOME	ACTUAL TOTAL INCOME	BUDGETED EXPENSES	ACTUAL EXPENSES	MONTH GAIN OR LOSS	YEAR GAIN OR LOSS
January	\$19,604	\$17,590	\$20,579	\$19,186	\$23,969	\$21,044	-\$1,858	-\$1,858
February	\$19,604	\$16,034	\$20,579	\$16,049	\$23,969	\$19,106	-\$3,057	-\$4,915
March	\$19,604	\$15,964	\$20,579	\$16,964	\$23,969	\$23,574	-\$6,610	-\$11,525

May 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
While Chris is away, The Rev. Katie Van Der Linden, Pastor of Ebenezer Moravian Church, will be available for pastoral care emergencies. She can be reached at (610) 442-3790.				1 Pastor out of Office ⇒ 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	2 ⇒ OFFICE CLOSED	3 ⇒
4 ⇒ Holy Communion 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast	5 ⇒	6	7	8 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	9 OFFICE CLOSED	10
11 Festival of the Christian Home NO 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast	12 1 p.m. Staff meets	13	14 3:30-5:30. SENIOR CARE FAIR AT SR. CENTER	15 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	16 OFFICE CLOSED	17
18 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; 10:00 – WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship 11:30, Racial Justice “bystander training” in Fellowship Hall. 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast	19 6:30, Council NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	20	21	22 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast 1:00-6:00 BLOOD DRIVE	23 OFFICE CLOSED	24
25 Rural Life Sunday- Blessing of the Pets 9:00 a.m. Sr. Choir; 10:00 – OUTDOOR WORSHIP; Coffee Fellowship 6 pm - Cable TV Broadcast	26 Memorial Day Office Closed	27	28	29 10am - Cable TV Broadcast 5pm - Cable TV Broadcast	30	31`